

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 IGA-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /070 W

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P 191228Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4478

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 4384

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

3.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EAID,APER,US,LA

SUBJ: USAID EMPLOYEE PREVENTED FROM LEAVING LAOS

1. NEW TWIST TO HARASSMENT OF U.S. MISSION WAS ADDED JUNE 19 WHEN DISSIDENT LAO EMPLOYEES OF USAID AND THEIR STUDENT ALLIES PERSUADED (VIENTIANE SIDE) IMMIGRATION POLICE AT WATTAY AIRPORT TO BLOCK DEPARTURE OF USAID BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER MICHAEL A. ROGAL. POLICE CAPTAIN ON DUTY AT AIRPORT TRIED TO MAINTAIN THAT HE WAS NOT TECHNICALLY REFUSING ROGAL (WHO HAD VALID ENTRY/EXIT VISA) PERMISSION TO DEPART, BUT HE DELAYED MATTERS PAST TAKE-OFF OF ROGAL'S FLIGHT.

2. WE HAVE OBTAINED COPY OF REQUEST FROM PROTESTORS TO IMMIGRATION POLICE, WHICH SAYS (RATHER REDUNDANTLY): "COOPERATION IS REQUESTED NOT TO PERMIT MR. ROGAL TO LEAVE LAOS BECAUSE HE IS STILL INVOLVED IN THE PROBLEMS OF THE PROTEST AT USAID WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN SOLVED. THE PROTEST COMMITTEE THUS REQUESTS COOPERATION FROM THE
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IMMIGRATION POLICE NOT TO LET THIS PERSON OUT OF THIS

COUNTRY."

3. ROGAL HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN PREPARING SEPARATION PAY FOR USAID EMPLOYEES. IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO PAY ALL OF THEM, AND SOME WHO HAVE BEEN PAID ARE NOW CLAIMING THAT THEIR SEVERANCE PAYMENTS WERE NOT ACCURATELY CALCULATED OR WERE BASED ON ERRONEOUS PERSONNEL RECORDS. EMBASSY WILL INHERIT TASK OF DEALING WITH FINAL PAYMENTS STILL TO BE MADE AND ANY NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS, IN COORDINATION WITH AID/W. ALL USAID FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RECORDS ARE ALREADY EN ROUTE TO WASHINGTON, AND ROGAL WAS HEADED THERE PRECISELY TO COMPLETE THE JOB ON THE BASIS OF THOSE RECORDS.

4. EMBOFF AND ANOTHER USAID EMPLOYEE WHO HAD BEEN PRESENT AT WATTAY BARGED IN ON FOREIGN MINISTER'S CHEF DE CABINET SOUBANH LATE AFTERNOON TO PROTEST PGNU ROLE IN PREVENTING ROGAL'S DEPARTURE AND TO EXPLAIN CIRCUMSTANCES IN PARA 3 ABOVE AND RESULTING IRONY: THAT THE SOONER ROGAL GOT TO WASHINGTON, THE SOONER THE EMPLOYEES' PAYMENTS AND ADJUSTMENTS WOULD BE MADE.

5. CHEF DE CABINET REACTED WITH SOME AMUSEMENT TO PROTESTORS' REQUEST TO IMMIGRATION BUT TURNED MORE SERIOUS WHEN HE REALIZED, CLEARLY FOR FIRST TIME, EXTENT TO WHICH USAID HAD ALREADY SCALED DOWN AND PHASED OUT FUNCTIONS IN ORDER TO MEET JUNE 30 DEADLINE. HE SEEMED RELIEVED, HOWEVER, TO LEARN THAT EMBASSY WOULD TAKE ON RESIDUAL USAID ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS (ALTHOUGH HE WAS WARNED THAT ACTION COULD NOT ALWAYS BE PROMPT).

6. SOUBANH DECLINED OFFER OF WRITTEN EXPLANATION OF ROGAL'S STATUS AND OF FOREGOING CIRCUMSTANCES AND SAID HE WOULD TELEPHONE EMBASSY AT OPENING OF BUSINESS JUNE 20 WITH ANSWER REGARDING ROGAL'S ABILITY TO DEPART LAOS.
CHAPMAN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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